SITREP.07.02

SITUATION REPORT ON EMERGENCY TRANSBOUNDARY OUTBREAK PESTS (ETOPS) FOR JULY WITH A FORECAST TILL MID-SEPTEMBER, 2002

SUMMARY

1. Summary: This report provides an update about recent activities on emergency transboundary outbreak pests (ETOPs) in Africa, the Middle-East, Central and Southwest Asia, and Latin America. The report covers ETOP activities in July with a forecast till mid-September, 2002. It addresses the major transboundary outbreak pests, including desert, Italian, migratory, red, brown, Moroccan, and Madagascar migratory locusts, armyworm and the red-billed quelea birds. A brief overview of the current status of each of these pests is provided in the remainder of this summary and detailed accounts are provided thereafter.

2. Desert locust, *Schistocerca gregaria* (Forskal). The desert locust situation remained calm in July in the summer breeding areas in Sahelian west Africa. However, it is possible that a few adults may have persisted in southeastern Mauritania and northern Mali in areas that recently received rain. In late June 250 ha of hoppers and fledglings were treated in addition to the 20 ha that were reported in mid June in Morocco. With the increase in the rain fall, it is possible that small-scale breeding will occur in southern Mauritania, northern Mali and Niger during the forecast period.

3. A few isolated adults were seen in Sudan and the interior of Yemen in July. With the recent rains that fell in the interior of Sudan and northern Oman, conditions are likely to improve in these and other areas along the Red Sea Coasts of Saudi Arabia where limited-scale breeding is possible during the forecast period. Despite the light rains that fell in northwestern Somalia and eastern Ethiopia, no significant locust developments are likely in these areas during the forecast period.

4. No locusts were reported from the summer breeding areas in the eastern region. Only very few isolated adults were seen in Pakistan, along the Indo-Pakistan outbreak areas. It is possible that a few adult locusts may also be present in adjacent areas in Rajasthan, India where conditions are more favorable. Small scale breeding could occur in the summer breeding areas in Pakistan and India during the forecast period, but significant developments are not likely.

5. Red locust, *Nomadacris septemfasciata* (Surville). Red locust concentrations persisted in the Iku-Katavi, Malagarasi and Wembere outbreak areas in Tanzania. The locust situation in the other outbreak areas remained relatively calm. The seasonal grass burning currently in progress in all the red locust outbreak areas is likely to further concentrate the locusts in unburnt grass islands. There is also a probability of some of the swarms migrating out of the Iku-Katavi and Malagarasi outbreak areas and invading neighboring areas. However, this will be reduced significantly after the plans for controlling the locusts that are scheduled for the August with the assistance of the UN/FAO's TCP project and Norwegian government are implemented.

6. Madagascar migratory locust, *Locusta migratoria capito* (L.). No detailed account of the

Malagasy migratory locust was received in July, however, the Malagasy Anti-Locust Unit and the FAO assessment carried out in April and May estimated that some 250,000 ha of affected areas will require treatment and the European Union indicated that a total of 800,000 ha. may need chemical treatment.

7. Other locusts and grasshoppers. The campaign against the Moroccan or Mediterranean locust, *Dociostaurus maroccanus (*Thunberg*)*, in Afghanistan has been more or less successfully completed. Plans are underway for capacity building to help implement early intervention during the next breeding season to avert the possibility for a major outbreak next year. No reports were received on brown locust, *Locustana pardalina* (Walker) from Namibia, Botswan, ort South Africa and further outbreaks are not expected during the forecast period, nevertheless, vigilant surveillance and monitoring are recommended to avoid any potential damage to crops and pasture. No reports were received on locusts from Latin America or other countries in Central Asia.

8. Armyworm, *Spodoptera exempta* (Walker). Reports of Armyworm outbreaks were not received from any of the DLCO/EA and the IRLCO-CSA member countries. The IRLCO/CSA countries will likely remain free from armyworm infestations.

9. Red-billed quelea, *Quelea quelea* (L.). Quelea birds continued being a problem to small grain cereal crops in Arusha Region, Tanzania. Control was effected by the Plant Health Services, Tanzania, in collaboration with Desert Locust Control Organization for Eastern Africa (DLCO-EA) which provided a spray aircraft. Quelea outbreaks were not reported from the other IRLCO-CSA member countries. Quelea birds are likely to be a problem to small grain cereal growers in the Rift Valley Province of Kenya and Arusha region of Tanzania. END OF SUMMARY

ENVIRONMENTAL SITUATION: WEATHER AND ECOLOGICAL CONDITIONS

10. With the oscillation between 10-17 N and an occasional surge north of the oscillation area, the Inter-Tropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ) brought some rain in the Adrar des Iforas and Timetrine, Mali and the Air, Niger. It also brought light rain to southeastern Mauritania in early July. Light rains also fell in northeastern Chad along the Sudan border. Apart from these, the rest of the Sahel remained dry and ecological conditions continued to be unfavorable for breeding.

11. Moderate rain fell towards the end of July in the extreme south of Algeria bordering Mali. Other countries in the region remained hot and dry.

12. Most of Eastern Africa remained unusually dry except Sudan where light rains fell in Kassala, Northern Darfur, and Northern Kordofan, eastern Ethiopia and Northwestern Somalia where light rains fell. Breeding conditions remained unfavorable.

13. Widespread light to heavy rains fell in a wide area in the interior of northern Oman where rain has been falling since March. However, breeding conditions still remain less favorable due to the high temperatures that prevailed during the past few months. Breeding conditions could be improving along the Red Sea coasts of Saudi Arabia where moderate rains fell in June. Most of

the interior of Yemen remained fairly dry except areas between Ataq and Nisab where green vegetation persisted.

14. Most of the summer breeding areas along the Indo-Pakistan border remained dry and breeding conditions unfavorable. Good rains fell in some places in Rajasthan, India during the second half of June.

15. The weather condition in the red locust outbreak areas remained relatively dry during the month. However, some showers were recorded in the Buzi-Gorongosa plains (26.1mm). Temperatures were relatively low in most of the outbreak areas.

DESERT LOCUST ACTIVITY

16. Western and northwestern Africa. A late report from Morocco indicated that hoppers and fledgling were treated on 251 ha on 26-27 June at Oued Draa, 2839N/0853E and 2923N/0725E where 20 ha of 4th-5th instar hoppers and fledglings were treated earlier on 23-24 June. The locusts were controlled by ground means. An unconfirmed report also indicated that scattered adults were sighted in Adrar des Iforas and Adrar Namel on July 12th and at Tin Aouanene on the 17th. No locusts were reported from Mauritania, Niger, Chad, Senegal, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Gambia, Guinea Bissau and Guinea Conakry western and northwestern Africa and Algeria, Tunisia and Libya northern Africa.

17. Forecast: Low numbers of isolated adults may be seen in a few places in Tagant, Trarza, northern Brakna, the two Hodhs – Hodh El Gharbi and Hodh El Charguih, Mauritania, Adrar des Iforas, Mali, and Tamesna and western Air, Niger. Isolated adults may also be present in areas of recent rainfall in Chad. No locust activities are expected in other countries in the region during the forecast period.

18. Eastern and northeastern Africa, and the Near East: No locusts were reported in July from these regions.

19. Forecast: Isolated adults are likely to be present and breed on a small-scale in Northern Darfur, Northern Kordofan, and the White Nile States, Sudan. A few isolated locusts may be present and breed on a small-scale near Jizan, Saudi Arabia, where good rains fell in June. In spite of the fact light to moderate rains fell recently in eastern Ethiopia and northwestern Somalia, no significant locust activities are likely during the forecast period. Relatively calm situation is expected to persist during the forecast period in all other countries in these regions, including Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Kuwait, UAR, Bahrain, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Qatar, Syria, and Turkey. Nevertheless, routine monitoring remains essential to avert any undetected locust upsurges.

20. Eastern region. A few isolated solitary mature adults were seen during the second half of June at seven locations in the summer breeding areas in Tharparkar Desert, Cholistan and La Bela valley, west of Karachi. The same populations were sighted during the first half of July at eight places in Cholistan and Tharparkar, Pakistan. In India, desert locusts mixed with grasshoppers were sighted in early July in crops at two locations in Rajasthan, near Jalore 2445N/7126E and

Bhinmal (2500N/7115E) and at Tharad (2424N/7138E), Gujarat. No locusts were reported from Iran and Afghanistan in July.

21. Forecast: Low numbers of adults are expected to persist in the Tharparkar and Cholistan deserts, Pakistan and Rajasthan, India and the numbers will possibly increase slightly. No further developments are expected in the other countries in the region during the forecast period.

22. Central Asia: In Afghanistan, the multi-donor supported control campaign against Moroccan/Mediterranean locust, *D. maroccanus (*Thunberg*)*, has been completed. Surveys are currently underway to establish egg laying areas to plan effective early intervention next Spring. In anticipation of the high possibility for a widespread laying during the past several weeks and more in the coming weeks, a preventive planning, including training survey and field officers as well as crop protection technicians is well underway. This will, no doubt, strengthen host country capacity to implement early intervention plans during the coming breeding season and could avert a major outbreak that could otherwise occur next cropping year.

23. Forecast: It is likely that large scale egg laying has occurred in a number of areas in northern and northeastern Afghanistan and/or coulf pissibly be in progress.

24. LAC regions. No reports were received from LAC countries.

25. Forecast. It is likely that locust activities will further diminish and no significant activities are expected during the forecast period.

OTHER LOCUST ACTIVITY

26 Red locust, *N. septemfasciata* (Surville). Red locust concentrations and swarms which were located during survey operations in June in the Iku-Katavi, Malagarasi and Wembere outbreak areas in Tanzania persisted. Control operations are scheduled to commence in August. USAID/AFR/SD/CMR-AELGA provided financial assistance for the initial stage to support survey, monitoring as well as for repairing IRLCO/CSA helicopter to be used for these purposes. The UN/FAO and the Norwegian government are providing assistance for the control campaign due to commence in August. It is expected that the campaign will be followed up with hopper control next February/March.

The red locust situation in the other outbreak areas namely; Lake Chilwa plains in Malawi, Buzi-Gorongosa plains in Mozambique, Lake Rukwa plains in Tanzania, Kafue Flats and Mweru wa Ntipa plains in Zambia, remained relatively quite.

27. Forecast: The seasonal grass burning currently in progress in all the red locust outbreak areas is likely to further concentrate the locusts in unburnt grass islands. There is the probability of some of the swarms migrating out of the Iku-Katavi and Malagarasi outbreak areas and invading neighboring areas. However, this probability will be reduced significantly after commencement of control operations that are scheduled for August.

The end of the current drought affecting Zambia, Malawi, Swaziland, Mozambique and Zimbabwe, will likely give rise to serious outbreaks of ETOPs which could affect the traditional red locust as well as armyworm outbreak regions in Malawi, Mozambique, Zambia, and also Madagascar. Post-drought outbreaks of brown locusts may also become more evident in southern Botswana, southern Namibia and South Africa It is important that routine survey and monitoring activities are implemented. It is important that routine survey and monitoring activities are implemented.

28. Madagascar migratory *Locust, L. migratoria capito* (L.). No detailed report was received in July on the Malagasy migratory locust, however, the Malagasy Anti-Locust Unit and the FAO assessment carried out in April and May estimated that some 250,000 ha of infested areas would require treatment and the European Union indicated that a total of 800,000 ha. could possibly need to be sprayed.

29. Other locusts and grasshoppers. No reports were received on brown locust, *L. pardalina* (Walker). No further outbreaks are expected during the forecast period, nevertheless, vigilant surveillance and monitoring are recommended to avoid any potential damage to crops and pasture.

ARMYWORM ACTIVITY

30. Armyworm, *S. exempta* (Walker). Reports of Armyworm outbreaks were not received from any of the DLCO./EA or IRLCO-CSA member countries.

31. Forecast: Most of the DLCO/EA and IRLCO/CSA members countries are likely to remain free from any serious armyworm infestations during the forecast period.

QUELEA BIRD ACTIVITY

32. Red-billed quelea, *Q. quelea* (L.). Quelea birds continued being a problem to small grain cereal crops in Arusha Region, Tanzania. Control operations were carried out by the Plant Health Services, Tanzania, in collaboration with Desert Locust Control Organization for Eastern Africa (DLCO-EA) which provided a spray aircraft. Quelea outbreaks were not reported from any of the other IRLCO-CSA member countries and nor reports were received on Quelea from DLCO/EA.

33. Forecast: Quelea birds are likely to be a problem to small grain cereal growers in the Rift Valley Province of Kenya and Arusha region of Tanzania.

RECOMMENDATIONS

34. Although the current locust and other migratory pest populations, by and large, did not call for significant control actions, some intensive control operations were carried out against different pests in a number of countries. It should be noted that, if left unattended, there is a likelihood for the pest populations to gradually increase in the coming months to a level that could pose serious

threats to crops and pasture. Therefore, it is crucial that regular surveillance and monitoring are maintained and that reports are communicated promptly to the appropriate bodies within the national and/or regional systems.

ACTION REQUESTED AND CONTACT INFORMATION

35. The Africa Emergency Locust and Grasshopper Assistance (AELGA) project is administered by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), bureau for Africa (AFR), Office of Sustainable Development (SD), crisis mitigation and recovery division (CMR). AELGA works closely with the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization (UN/FAO), DLCO/EA, IRLOC/CSA, Information Core for Southern Africa Migratory Pests (ICOSAMP), USAID bilateral and regional missions, research establishments, and host country ministries to provide continuous monitoring and analysis of crop protection risks associated with ETOPs that have a potential for causing large-scale outbreak emergencies. The purpose of this effort is to acquire data and information on ETOPs to prepare regular updates and disseminate to all interested stakeholders. Unsolicited reports or information about ETOPs situations and activities in your region or country are always welcome and appreciated.

36. Missions with programs on food security, emergency pests and other related activities, host countries and regional organizations with a similar portfolio, as well as other stakeholders are kindly requested to forward your reports by the last day of each month. Please, forward reports, information, questions, and/or requests to Dr. Yene Belayneh, ybelayneh@afr-sd.org FAX: 202-219-0506 with a cc to Drs. Joe Vorgetts (jvorgetts@afr-sd.org) and Harry Bottenberg, Hbottenberg@afr-sd.org

For more information on the weather conditions, please, visit the following web sites:
http://www.fews.net
http://www.fao.org/WAICENT/faoinfo/economic/giews/economic/engslish/esahel/sehtoc.htm

For more information on ETOP activities, you may visit:
http://www.fao.org/news/global/locusts/locuhome.htm
http://www.english/newsroom/news/2002/5000-en.htm/

UPCOMING EVENTS

Interregional Trainer Training Course on Alternative Application Strategies and Tactics (AAST) for acridid control. Nov. 2002. Those interested can contact Dr. Yene Belayneh, ybelayneh@afr-sd.org, phone/fax: 202-219-0495/202-219-0506